The Raven King

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The Raven King

by Moonstruckidiot

Summary

Will attends his regular session with his psychiatrist Bedelia Du Maurier, she tells him a fairy tale about a mighty king who rules another magical dimension (who could that king possibly be?????) and how a young boy (Will) was tainted by darkness. Realising he is losing his connection with his own world and determined to stop Hannibal, Will confronts him, things do not go as planned.

I HAVE ADDED A SECOND CHAPTER - Will is not happy with his new marital status, Hanni tries to convince him otherwise, Hanni meets team sassy science, Bev plays cupid, Happy Ending

Series complete :-)

Inspiration taken from Hans Christian Andersen's The Snow Queen

This is not related to John Uskglass the Raven King (I didn't know about that until it came up in the tags)

Third part of my stags head series, follows on from Pub at the end of the road and Follow the Raven, could be read separately but it may not make much sense

Notes

When Bedelia is telling Will the fairy tale I use three dots to separate her story telling from the conversation she is having with Will. I hope that's not too confusing

The sex is brief, is not pornographic and is really there as a means to take the plot forward, honestly, otherwise I wouldn't have attempted it. Its my first attempt at writing sexual content so sorry its not great or even good :) (the lovely Victorine advised to practice :) so this is the first practice).

No Beta - I'm aware this plot maybe a bit convoluted - what with fairy tales, time shifts, other dimensions and sex - so if something doesn't make sense let me know and i'll try to improve it. I hope this makes sense but it might just be a bit too ambitious for my writing skill
Update 6/7/16 i had originally planned for a fourth and final part and as i have been writing it i've decided to post it as a second chapter to the raven king. It will be the last of this series.

See the end of the work for more notes

Chapter 1

Will has been staring at the same spot on the carpet for ten minutes when he hears the sound of a door being opened by the well groomed hand of his psychiatrist, Bedelia Du Maurier. He looks at the clock it is 7pm exactly, the doctor is on time as always. Every Friday for the last three months, since Jack recommended, more like demanded, he get help Will has sat in this room awaiting his appointment, it is the longest he's stayed with a shrink.

He walks passed Du Maurier without the courtesy of a greeting, he doesn't feel the need to be nice in her presence. The room is large and airy, white washed walls complemented by a dark blue, deep pile carpet and long, matching curtains. The walls are adorned by Doctor Du Maurier's credentials and one large silver gilt framed mirror. The only furniture an antique writing bureau and two chairs. Sometimes Will wonders, admittedly when at his most paranoid, if this room is hired just for the purposes of these meetings but the little bronze notice on the entry door would indicate otherwise.

Du Maurier is beautiful, glacially so, blond tresses so glossy they gleam like ice melting under a warming sun. She is elegant not just of person but of speech, sometimes though the silky smooth timbre of her voice irritates Will like fingers dragging down a chalk board. He senses that Doctor Du Maurier is not what she appears to be but she is difficult for him to read, he glimpses rather than 'sees' her. These glimpses though are one of the reasons he comes back. She appears to care just enough for her remoteness to be attributed to clinical detachment, but Will knows its just appearance. Her lack of emotion is refreshing, devoid of the pity or revulsion he has come to expect from others, in her presence he is not immediately reminded that he lacks, whatever it is that he lacks.

It is rare that Will fills the chair opposite the doctor, preferring to pace around the room or look out the window. The doctor does play her part well, listening attentively as he talks, occasionally offering him words of acceptance or challenge. To him though she is a sounding board or a mirror allowing him to process his thoughts without the distraction of another's emotions and it also ticks the box he needs to be ticked.

Standing stiff, hugging himself tightly Will stares unblinkingly into the surface of the gilt mirror. He is at once both spikily defensive and enticingly vulnerable, not unlike a hedgehog Du Maurier observes dryly to herself. His pose invokes an urge within the doctor to see his head crushed under the spike of her heel but with the flutter of eyelashes she dismisses the thought as not advisable. Will has not spoke since he entered the room and a silence has been allowed to form between the doctor and her patient. Some sessions they spend almost entirely like this, but not today.

"Your thinking about him now aren't you?"

The normally twitchy man stills, *what the fuck*. He turns, consciously stopping before he aligns with Du Maurier his confusion directed to a patch of air near her left shoulder, "What? How?" Blinking several times he tries to comprehend what she just said, "I've only just met him. How, how do you know?"

She doesn't rush to answer instead gives the appearance of considering her words, "I have known Hannibal a long time." Shifting in her seat to face Will she is amused to see the ridiculous man turn his back to her in favour of a particularly interesting wall.

"So, so its just a coincidence," Will grates out over his shoulder.

"Are there such things as coincidences Will?" Lifting her right hand Du Maurier examines her long, painted nails one by one, no chips. "Reality for you has always been more flexible than for most humans. Your mind experiences multiple realities slipping all too easily into the mind of one serial killer after another, recreating their world, becoming them."

"I see you have been listening doctor," Will snorts, now back at the mirror he observes Du Maurier's reflection, it smiles at him sharply. "What has that to do with Hannibal?" he snaps back.

She gives an elegant little huff and ignores him, "You find your way back but recently darkness has followed you, creeping into your peripheral vision, nightmare creatures, inexplicable noises and on occasion you have found yourself in places you can't remember travelling to. How many times have you questioned your sanity?"

"My brain is playing tricks on me, but I am not insane."

The doctor shifts forward, "I believe you are sane, but you are losing control."

Will meets Du Maurier's eyes just for a moment in the mirror, her eyes not older as such, but wiser, more brutal and ... yes, with a touch of fear. Whatever she says next he will listen.

"Once upon a time," she says with a quirk to her pretty mouth.

"Seriously, a fairy tale," Will almost turns to face her before he stops himself.

"Think of it as another reality." Du Maurier sees his reflection flick its eye's upwards but he does not interrupt her when she continues...

"Humans have dominion over the world of the day, they think themselves the Apex predator but at night they run, like frantic mice, through endless, dark corridors pursued by nameless, faceless terrors. Come the morning when sleep is shaken from heads and sweaty nightwear tossed into the laundry basket the 'nightmare' is also washed away. Children know monsters exist, that is why they hold their breath when they check under the bed, wedge a chair in front of the wardrobe and leave a night light on. When, in the dead of night, they scream, "the witch is biting my arm," does it ever occur to their sleep befuddled parents that a witch was actually trying to eat their child, no of course not, but maybe they should."...

... Du Maurier stops for a moment looking at Will she can never be certain where his attention is, the pause is met by an arched eye brow, directed once again over her shoulder, asking, *is there a point to this?*

A tilt of her head and narrowing of eyes replies, *all in good time*...

...“Plenty of time and money has been spent exploring worlds previously inaccessible, the ocean beds, the moon and atoms amongst others. What if there is a, dimension, shall we say, which is not accessible to humans via their sciences, but via their dreams and then only ever as prey. This dimension is part of human consciousness, spoken of in fairy tales, myths and legends, giving it life whilst also dismissing it.

What if, for the sake of argument, this dimension was ruled by a King, a great and powerful King, so old that some say he has always existed, so powerful that others say he is the creator. The truth no one knows, perhaps not even the King himself after all such things are a minor detail.

The great King is known by many different names, including some familiar to humans, but one of his favourites is the Raven King” ...

...“Why?” asks Will with a noticeable chuckle. “Does he turn into a big bird?” he snorts as a picture of a large yellow bird pops into his head.

Du Maurier sighs at the man’s idiocy, “no, there are two reasons, a cloak made of Raven feathers and his habit of turning beings who disappoint him into Ravens.”

Will nods his head, “a useful superpower,” he smirks.

Sometimes she can keep her irritation with the twitchy little man out of her voice but this is not one of those occasions. “They have a beautiful aviary and are well cared for. There are worse things he can do, much worse but that is not the point of this story.”

Will has, of course, noted that Du Maurier is taking this far too seriously...

... “It is said that no matter how many times you count the feathers on the cloak you will always end up with a different number. Sprites, who” ...

...“Sprites?”

“Just listen” ...

... “Sprites, who are known to enjoy counting, have never come to an agreement on this matter. It was rumoured the power of the King was invested in him by the wearing of the cloak and if he could be separated from it he could be killed and the kingdom seized.

One day a Sprite found the cloak lying on the King's bed, the King was no where to be found, so the Sprite took the item of clothing to his leader. If they had been sensible they would have known to leave it where they found it but Sprites have never been known for their common sense. The leader, known to be greedy and power hungry, tried on the cloak and as he stood in front of a mirror admiring himself he did indeed feel more powerful and handsome; so the rumours must be true. When other Sprites found out about the cloak they became so intoxicated with its power they squabbled over it, one after the other snatching it and flying up into the sky, higher and higher, they didn't see the feathers begin to fall in a trail behind them. They only noticed when the cloak was in tatters and the feathers were scattered far and wide in the human realm"...

..."Feathers, black feathers," Will asks frowning and scratching his head, *No, couldn't be*

"Yes" *Ah, at last he starts to take this seriously*, Du Maurier smiles at Will and continues...

..."The King stood before them dressed in a beautiful three piece suit, navy blue with pinstripes. Every now and then a stripe would sparkle as if someone had captured a galaxy and stitched in the stars. The most striking thing about him though was he looked more disappointment than furious with the thieves, although it was hard to tell as most courtiers could not read the King at all. The Sprites did know however that they had failed a test. The King does love his games and his tests, who is bright enough? who is loyal enough? who is worthy enough?

"You are fools," he said his clear voice reverberating around the hall sending a chill through all the courtiers, "if you think my power comes from a mere article of clothing."

It was in fact the other way round, the power the Sprites had felt had been absorbed into the cloak from the King over time but they were too stupid to know. He ordered that each feather be found and the cloak remade, if they failed they and their families would die. The Sprites went to the four corners of the world, collected the feathers and remade the cloak, it was handed back to the King at a lavish ceremony. He examined it carefully, inspecting the lining, every stitch and every feather, his face a picture of neutrality no one could tell if he was pleased or not.

At last he said, "it is very good but you are missing one feather. I am not so evil as to condemn you all for your failure but your leader will be punished."

Verger, the leader of the Sprites felt a hardness start in his toes, not dissimilar to the solidity of feet too long in the snow. He tried to turn, to walk away but whilst he could move his arms he could not do the same with his legs. Apologies and curses poured forth from his mouth as he felt the circulation of his blood slow, his organs begin to harden and he realised the impending horror of being trapped inside his own body. His senses started to dull when his lungs stopped their rise and fall and his heart fell silent, but he still opened his mouth in a spluttering, gasping scream at the tightness in his throat. Screams teared through his thoughts until his brain at last fell quiet.

The King had been merciful he could have wiped out an entire species but had instead acquired a new statue. He whispered into the cold, hard ear, “I have the perfect spot for you in my garden.”...

... “Fuck, are you telling me that Hannibal is this, this King, or that he is evil, what exactly are you telling me?” neither explanation makes sense to the confused and highly agitated man.

“What makes you ask that?” counters Du Maurier, she likes her games to.

“Hmm, the statue ... in the garden.”

“I cant say I’ve ever seen it. Do you ache for him Will? Oh yes with every fibre of your being. How does he make you feel?”

Will picks up on a hint of jealousy but knows he’d be best served by unravelling his own emotions and not getting side tracked. He thinks back to the time they spent in the garden and the question is easy to answer, “Peaceful, safe, complete, loved, I guess. This is a lot to take in, I can’t believe it, it goes against everything...”

Du Maurier shakes her head, “You know. You can feel it, things aren’t right. He is severing your ties with this world, but then your ties have been severing since you were a child.”

“Fuck”... *it can’t, it just can’t be.*

“These sessions work better if you are articulate Will.”

“If he is this King then why does Freddie Lounds talk to him without respect?”

“If you were listening you’d know he likes playing games with his subjects, she is rapidly failing the test. Now can I continue, correct me if I get anything wrong.”...

... “It would be incorrect to say the last feather was never found, it was, by a child, a beautiful boy with curly dark brown hair, pale skin and wide blue eyes. To the towns people where he lived his beauty was the least important thing about him as physical attractiveness is not something earned. Instead the boy was loved for his heart which was bottomless in its kindness and caring. When someone was sad, they’d find the boy would appear by their side and although they wouldn’t talk about the details, after all he was just a child, they knew he could, on some deep level, understand and feel their emotions.

The boy was raised by his father and although they were poor, he was well loved and well fed and that was enough to assure his happiness. He frequently went into the woods around where he lived and it was there where he found the feather. It was black as ink and silky soft and it tickled when he rubbed it against his cheek, to the boy it was a treasure. His father suggested he make it into a lure for fishing but the boy said ‘no,’ instead during the day he carried it around with him and on a night he placed it by the side of his pillow.

This would have been fine if the feather was from the human world, but it was not. Now it is a general rule that that creatures from the other dimension do not care for humans and why should they, they are after all just prey. There are a few qualities that can make a supernatural being covet a human, great beauty, a very kind heart or if a person is especially gifted. But by and large humans are just pigs to be fattened and slaughtered. The boy of course possessed all three desirable qualities and the magical feather from the King's coat recognised its master's perfect mate"...

...

"I don't want to listen to anymore of this rubbish."

"I have nearly finished but you must listen to the end."

...

..."When the boy slept he breathed in particles of the feather and the town's people didn't know why but their happy little boy grew cold and withdrawn. It could be put down to the process of growing up but it was more than that, the particles had slowly, very slowly began spreading, changing how and what he saw. He could see the darkness in someone, as much if not more than the light, it both repelled and fascinated him. The older he got the more comfortable he became with the dark, normal human's didn't like what he could see..."...

..."I am not attracted to the dark, to evil." Will turns and is looking directly at the doctor.

"Really?" says Du Maurier shaking her head and laughing, "You are only fooling yourself."

Will closes his eyes and his shoulders fall forward, Du Maurier recognises a moment of resignation and almost, almost but not quite, feels sorry for him. He crosses the floor and slumps into the chair across from her, head in hands.

"You found another feather about three months ago," Du Maurier states.

Will nods, "I took it out of evidence, its at home."

The doctor breaths in and out lightly, "The feather is a sign of his judgement one is always left at all his tableaus. What could be more fitting then for one of my kind to be displayed for all humans to gawk at and dissect, it's a fitting deterrent."

Will can hear Du Maurier's disgust at the idea, at another time he may have taken some satisfaction in a witty taunt, but today wasn't one of those days. "You said he was separating me from this world."

"Yes, its rare but its what we do when we covet, we claim the human by trapping their mind in our dimension. They are then played with, or perhaps tortured would be a better word, whilst in their own world they are confined to mental institutions or coma wards. You, I believe will fare much better than them, he seems to actually love you."

“Is there anyway for me to stop this?”

“You can refuse him.”

“What do you mean?”

“I have already said too much, enough to end up as field kabuki if I’m not careful.”

Will nods, “Thank you,” he says softly before adding “Who are you?”

Du Maurier gets up from her seat and walks towards the mirror. As she steps into it, her dress turns a dazzlingly white.

“Ah, the Snow Queen, of course,” mutters Will he couldn’t think of anything more fitting.

Once sat in the waiting sleigh she turns and smiles, “Good bye, Will.”

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After his session with Du Maurier Will heads back to the simple companionship of his dogs. He picks up a glass from the night before, swills it out and pours himself two fingers of whiskey. It feels insane to believe the doctor but he does. She’s right he does know, he has always known. This other dimension is written into the marrow of his bones and the cogs of his rational mind, his continued denial would be madness. He’ll confront Hannibal, or who ever he is, tomorrow, resolutely and firmly demand he stop whatever game he is playing and leave him alone, but for now he feels the need for another drink.

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“Fuck, fuck,” staggering back Will feels the sharp edge of a table dig into his thighs, a *leg, a fucking human leg, dogs, oh god, meat, fuck, people, people meat, fuck, dogs*

Hannibal puts down the knife he has been using to carve the meat for Abel and Cain’s lunch, then unties the strings of his white chefs apron, he folds it carefully and places it on the back of a chair.

He turns smiling pleasantly at Will, “You’ve come at lunch time, would you like me to fix you something?”

For one whom constant motion is a reliable means of evasion Will feels strangely rooted to the spot, “No, no, fuck no,” he closes his eyes, now would be a good time to wake and be somewhere else. Opening them he finds Hannibal a hair’s breadth away, *Fuck, I’m going to die.*

Reaching out slowly, as not to startle, Hannibal cups the side of Will face, the gesture is meant to be grounding, “I need you to be calm.”

Will’s whole body is shaking, hands grasping the table behind him to stop from crumbling to the floor, but he can feel a sense of calm trickle down from the thumb stroking his cheek.

Hannibal is so close Will can feel the dewiness of the man's breath against his skin as he is asked, " Will you stay with me, Will?"

A simple two letter word on the tip of Will's tongue is erased by the press of lips against his own. He does not reciprocate nor does he when it is followed by another soft kiss. He is rather startled, and definitely not thinking straight, but manages to open his mouth and shape the word 'no'. His tongue though responds to the graze of another and speech is forgotten as Hannibal slides into Will. With a hand firmly nestled in brown chocolate curls Hannibal repositions their mouths securing deeper access.

'No', still needs to be said, but being this close to someone, Will ignores the whispers of 'thing' at the back of his mind, feels good. He'd sort of forgotten how nice kissing could be and he doesn't want to stop anytime soon. Pushing away thoughts for a while Will closes his eyes and indulges in the smell, taste and feel of Hannibal, anything else can surely wait until they break apart.

On opening his eyes he finds his shirt is half undone and his breath hitches as he feels the skin on skin contact of a hand caressing his ass. He must be getting carried away, he missed the moment his clothing was breached but he's not complaining. Will blinks, trying to remember something important, and he finds his shirt is now on the floor along with his belt.

It is Hannibal who breaks their kissing, holding Will's head in his hands he smiles and watches the thought, *I was supposed to say 'no',* flicker across bewildered blue eyes. He maintains a neutral expression when Will's eyes meet his and he sees them struggle against blinking. With a brief shake of his head and a light hushing noise Hannibal silences Will's attempts to speak. Fingers run through silky curls as Hannibal whispers, "everything will be okay, I promise," then the man in his arms succumbs to the inevitable.

Will finds himself in Hannibal's bedroom, bare chests pressed together mouths locked in a deep kiss, as he blinks he knows what is coming next.

In the intimate soft light of evening curled toes glide against silky feathers and fur. Whining as his dick is slowly enveloped by a hot, wet mouth, Will's body hums on the verge of an orgasm he's being denied. Hannibal's skin is now so deep a blue its almost black, not a someone but a 'something', Will's only thought is *beautiful*. Looking up he finds a smile carved on lips others would describe as cruel, but to Will they are pure love. The air is filled by sounds, a language but not human, like a chant or an incantation its meaning unknown to Will but his body trembles as if caressed. Tipping over into expansive white hot bliss Will cries out for Hannibal and tastes himself on the mouth which answers him.

Two long fingers have breached his ass muscles, its more uncomfortable than painful and oh, yeah, definitely, most definitely pleasurable as the right spot is hit time and again. A sweaty, panting mess Will tastes a trace of Hannibal on his lips and something else, something metallic, blood, human blood and not his.

Will's legs have some how carried him to the bedroom door, the room is filled with bright afternoon sun, the bed is covered in crumpled white cotton sheets and Hannibal looks most definitely human.

“We need to talk about this, my love,” says Hannibal calmly as Will scrambles around to find some clothing.

Will just keeps repeating ‘no’.

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Hannibal sits on his chair by the fire, Cain and Abel by his feet, a satisfied smile on his face. He is sure that his beautiful boy will soon be sat opposite him.

“Today was perfect,” he says to Rob before admitting, “Will is a bit jittery but that is understandable. I need you to take this to him,” as he places something gold and glittery in the bird's beak.

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Will has only been out of the shower ten minutes when he hears a rap at the window, it is Rob. Opening the front door he says “Hello” and smiles at the Raven, he feels a little sad for the bird and wonders what he did to deserve such a punishment. Rob hops towards Will who offers him a grape but instead of taking the treat he deposits a ring.

The bird fly’s off as Will shouts, “No, I don’t want it, take it back.”

When Will next looks down the ring has found its way onto his finger and no amount of tugging can get it off. He was supposed to say 'no,' it should have been simple enough, but he can distinctly remember saying 'yes, fuck, yes, yes' repeatedly and loudly, he doesn’t know how he is going to explain his 'marriage' to his work colleagues.

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Will is not happy about his unexpected marital status, Hannibal tries to convince him otherwise and invites Jack and sassy science to the Stags Head. Bev gets herself into trouble (well not really) and Will is the only one who can free her. Bev plays cupid. Hannibal and Will kiss and make up.

Warning - Happy ending - its the final part of this series

Thanks to everyone who read this series, esp those who left kudos and comments♡♡
I loved writing this it, my imagination was able to run free

Chapter Notes

I had planned on a part four to this series, then decided to alter what I had originally planned, I now feel this fits better as the 2nd chapter to The Raven King.

there is a lot of dialogue - more than I have ever written - I hope its OK

I hope my editing is OK on this I'm a bit tired and need my bed

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Yesterdays crime scene is laid out on laboratory tables. Arms wrapped around himself Will is the picture of intense concentration searching to see if there is anything else to add to the scene he has already recreated.

Everyone waits silently, then, somewhere a phone rings, not a musical ring tone but a proper, old fashioned repetitive ring, ring, ring. Heads cock listening and wondering, *where is that sound coming from?*

“I didn’t know there was a actual phone in here,” says Price everyone shakes their head in agreement.

“Its over here somewhere,” says Jack locating it in the far corner of the lab, behind some old equipment no one uses.

When he has finished talking to the caller he turns a look of shock and surprise on his face.

Bev asks, “is everyth...”

“Will, your husband is being escorted down, he’s brought you lunch.”

Then as enacted in his worst nightmares everyone looks at Will and open their mouths. He wants to put his hands over his head and find a quiet corner somewhere, but no corner would be far enough.

Zeller stands open mouthed. Price smiles lost for words and Bev sidles over grinning.

Jack comes forward extending his hand, “Will, congratulation are in order.”

“No, no its,” says Will shrinking back from the onslaught, “it’s not what you think, its a mistake.”

“Fuck, he’s wearing a ring,” says Zeller pointing.

Just then the lab door opens and in walks a tall, immaculately dressed gentleman.

Well hello handsome, is clearly written on Bev’s face, then she looks at Will and back to handsome.

“Mistake, my ass,” she says to the flustered Will, before stepping towards Hannibal, introducing herself and then everyone else.

“Its a pleasure to meet you all, I wont encroach on your time, but I’d like to take my husband to lunch,” says Hannibal looking at Jack, “I’m sure you can spare him.”

“Yes, of course, half an hour,” says Jack looking at his watch.

“An hour,” replies Hannibal, before turning to Bev and handing her a business card, “It would be my pleasure if you and everyone had drinks and dinner at my place.”

Will, finally managing to shake himself out of his stasis, grabs Hannibal’s arm, “Out now,” he growls.

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“I wondered when you would show up, but did it have to be here?” says Will all but shoving Hannibal outside the lab door.

They walk along the many corridors and exit the building in silence. When they are on the other side of the car park only then is Hannibal allowed to speak, “I wanted to meet your friends.”

“Hannibal, just because you put a ring on it,” says Will lifting up his hand, “does not mean we are married.”

“Actually it does.”

“No, no, I came to your place to tell you to leave me alone,” Will shakes his head and directs his attention to some buildings in the far distance.

“You didn’t say no Will.”

“You stuck you tongue down my throat,” Will says spitting the words out, conscious he’s turning a delicate shade of pink.

“I thought you enjoyed our kissing,” Hannibal catches Will’s eyes for a second.

“I did,” acknowledges Will. He takes a breath as a memory of their mouths locked together flits through his mind, “but that is not the point.”

“It seemed the pleasantest way to stop you from saying no,” Hannibal’s eyes gleam in pleasure at the initial response.

“Ah, so Bedelia was right, refusing could have stopped this,” Will says walking passed Hannibal, coming to a stop by a low rise wall.

Hannibal chuckles, “no, it would have reset things back to the moment you walked off the crime scene and headed to the Stags Head, and it would have happened again and again until you gave the correct answer, so I thought a short cut was in order.”

“In this dimension it doesn’t work like that no means no, and you can’t just marry someone without asking them,” says Will.

“Need I remind you, you said yes, several times as I remember.”

“I’m glad you are finding this funny,” sarcasm shaking Will’s voice.

Realising he has most definitely said the wrong thing Hannibal raises his shoulders, straightens himself, frowns then looks up at the blue sky.

Will stands waiting.

Scrunching his eyes as if contemplating something of great importance, Hannibal clears his throat, “Hmm, I’m...”

Will raises his eyebrows, he does not look amused.

“I’m sorry,” Hannibal mouth twitches, “yes, I think that’s the right word.”

Breathing in, then slowly out through his mouth, Will takes one step forward and one to his right, he’s thinking. It strikes him that the lips (the rather lovely lips) of the man before him have probably never formed that particular word before, and its is genuinely meant. His expression softens, “Ok, Hannibal I get it, or at least some part of it. I’m expecting you to live by my human values and yet you are not human, we wouldn’t ask a lion not to hunt a baby wildebeest it would be against its nature.” Will rubs his hand over his mouth, “but I

have seen how you love Abel and Cain and how you nurture your garden, and I don't think that is all some pretence, is it?"

"No, Will I can assure you it is not."

"But you are not a lion you are a sentient being capable of purposively adapting your behaviour to changing circumstances, and if you want us to work you are going to have to compromise starting with a long discussion about consent."

"Over dinner tonight?"

Will shakes his head, a half grin on his face, he has once again given the advantage to Hannibal, "Okay."

"Good," says Hannibal his smile almost twinkling.

"One last thing, can you ask Freddie Lounds to stay away she accosted me the other day when I was out walking, she scared my dogs."

"You don't need to worry about her anymore."

"Oh God, what have you done?"

"She will be well taken care of."

"Fuck, you've turned her into a Raven."

"She was being rude."

Will stares at Hannibal, disbelieving at how easily he has just forgiven him. He asks himself, is he willing to spend eternity being apologised to by a... a... a...fuck he doesn't know what he is. "I can't do this, whatever this is, I don't know if you are the lovely guy who owns a bar, grows his own veg and likes playing pooh sticks or a demon who turns beings into Ravens for being rude, feeds people to his dogs and..."

"Will, she knows the penalties."

"Oh, so that's OK then. No. No. No. I want a normal life, who you are is not compatible with who I am. No matter how many times you reset time, the answer will be the same. No."

As he hurries away he hears Hannibal's raised voice informing him, "Beverley has just texted, the team is coming to the Stag's Head on Friday." In no mood to return to the lab, Will jumps into his car and heads to Wolftrap.

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Pausing before the door of the public bar at Stag's Head, Will closes his eyes and sighs, he wishes he could turn back time and never walk off the crime scene but he senses, one way or another, he would have always ended up here. The prospect of spending the evening

pretending everything is perfect feels too much and, as he pushes the door open, he feels sick to his stomach.

From the noise level its easy to tell where the team are, they're playing darts with Hannibal, Zeller is taking the piss out of Price for bouncing a dart off the board. Will thinks at least Bev and Jack should be able to give Hannibal a run for his money with the game. Hannibal is, of course, the first one to see Will and he just gazes, seeing that much love in someone's eyes is quite frankly scary and all Will can do is grimace under the intensity.

He tugs at Hannibal's arm taking him to one side. Avoiding looking directly at his husband he says, "I am here only to ensure that everyone leaves this establishment in one piece, is that clear."

"Of course Will, you have my word."

Hannibal turns to Bev and the guys and announces, "dinner will be served in a moment would you like to sit down," then heads to the kitchen.

Will takes a chair in between Bev and Jack pushing it back a little to maintain his personal space.

Leaning over Bev whispers, "Couldn't you have at least shaved and worn something that hasn't got 'I'm anti social, fuck off' all over it?" She looks at the well dressed and perfectly groomed man walking towards them with a serving trolley and then looks Will up and down, "We will have to go shopping."

"Nooo, we do not," shoots out of the mouth of a horrified looking Will, he wonders how he manages to say 'no' so easily now but not when he really needed to, although he's not sure Bev will take any notice either.

"Come sit," says Bev tapping the empty chair to the left of her, Hannibal dutifully complies.

"So, what did you think to our boy when you first saw him?" Bev asks.

"He was the most breath-taking thing I have ever seen," replies Hannibal.

Bev sits back and looks appreciatively at Hannibal saying, "Good answer."

Zeller on the other hand snorts "Really," he flinches as a pointed boot makes contact with his shin.

Hannibal, always courteous replies, "Yes of course and he remains so," then briefly smiles at a glaring Will.

Now that he has Hannibal's attention Zeller isn't letting it go, "Where did you two get hitched then?" raising his shoulders he shrugs at Bev, *What?* She gives him a look which says *play nice, or else.*

"It was an intimate affair, and I wouldn't want to embarrass my darling Will with details."

“Ah,” laughs Zeller, “it was Vegas then,” the whole table including Hannibal laughs, Will looks mortified and wonders if there was a bet on it.

“These vegetables are just right, really fresh, Hannibal,” says Jack tactful for once and trying to change the subject.

“Thank you, I grow my own, I can show you the kitchen garden sometime if you are interested.”

“Yes,” says Jack nodding, “that would be good, Bella, my wife, would love to see it.”

“I’d be more than happy to show the two of you around, I also have several beehives and the salmon comes from my own river. I make my own beer to, would you like a taste.”

“No, no he would not,” says Will looking daggers at Hannibal, before turning to Jack, “it wouldn’t mix well with the wine your drinking,” he did not mention that ‘people’ was one of the key ingredients.

“Well, I’ll talk with Bella and we’ll arrange something.”

“Very good,” says Hannibal nodding.

“Its a beautiful place you have here. When did you move in Will?” asks Bev, “Where are the dogs?”

Will is about to open his mouth when to his relief Hannibal smoothly intervenes, “I need to make additional accommodation for the dogs, so Will is still at Wolftrap.”

“Told you it was Vegas,” sniggers Zeller, he’ll have more than one bruise in the morning.

The rest of the night is spent pleasantly enough, Hannibal is the perfect host, plying drink and good conversation. Will remains quiet, but that is not out of the norm, he accepts light touches and occasional whispers from his husband without any noticeable discomfort. Everyone leaves safe and well.

.....

“Don’t worry, I’m not dead,” Bev says materialising just as Will is about to pour himself a glass of whiskey.

“What the fuck.”

"I’m with Hannibal,” she says, no hint of fear in her voice.

“Fuck, I’ll come get you,” says Will, quickly picking up his keys from their usual place on top of a pile of old fishing magazines.

“No, don’t worry,” Bev replies as she pops out in front of Will, he jumps and Bev looks pleased with herself, “its been pleasant.” She walks to the couch, looks disgusted at the dog hairs covering it and sits down, or at least her spectral like form does.

“So, you got yourself this gorgeous, intelligent and clearly besotted guy and you look like you wanted to kill him, I mean literally take a gun and shoot him in the face. Now remember I had had a few drinks, and I thought it a good idea to talk to him and give him some advice, you can be a bit temperamental you know.” She gives Will a look which says *are you going to argue with me?* he clearly is not. “I went back, couldn’t find him, wandered into the kitchen and well...”

“He promised me...” says Will.

“He promised you we would all leave okay and we did, I was just dumb enough to go back. He did want me to contact you straight away but, well, he does make the best cocktails, and those rooms of his are ten star and that maze is fabulous.”

“What, you’ve been in the maze?”

Spectral Bev laughs, “Don’t be jealous, he wouldn’t let me see the whole garden apparently some parts are just for the two of you, he’s quite the romantic.”

“You sound like your enjoying yourself.”

“Don’t get me wrong, he’s scary as hell, and I thought he was going to kill me, or worse, but he loves you and he doesn’t want to upset you.”

“Doesn’t want to upset me, fuck sake,” says Will looking increasingly agitated as he runs his hands up his face and through his hair.

“Will, people talk about their one and only, their eternal love, well he’s the real deal, immortal king and all.”

“He’s never going to let you go, you know who he is,” says Will, getting up from the couch and pacing.

“Relax, he’s right you are too tense. Hannibal said he’d erase my memory and leave me somewhere safe, no harm done.”

“What does he want?”

Bev looks at him eye brow arched.

“Me.”

“Well, yeah,” Will could hear the *dumb ass*

“I can’t, he’s...”

“As much as I’m enjoying myself, I’m not staying here forever all he talks about is you, so you” she says sticking her fingers in his bicep for emphasis, it passes right through him, “have no choice.”

“He transforms beings who are rude into Raven’s, thieves into garden statues, kills and displays those who disagree with him and oh, yeah, turns humans who innocently wander into his path into dog kibble.”

“Hmm, well, he’s not perfect but just think of him as a lonely, handsome King with a nice toned ass.”

Will sighs, and shoots down the whiskey he’d poured when Bev had first appeared, “Okay, I’ll meet with him.”

“I’ll tell him to come here tomorrow evening.”

“Tomorrow?”

“Yeah, a few more cocktails isn’t going to hurt and it’ll give you time to clean up in here,” says Bev shaking her head with disgust.

******

The tree in Will’s yard stands black against golden rays spilling out across a deep blue sky. A small figure, distinguishable from the landscape only by its upright, forward movement, walks towards the house. Will turns from his sentry positon on the porch and heads back inside leaving the door ajar, settling into a chair, whiskey glass in hand, he awaits his visitor.

“Don’t look so pleased with yourself,” says Will as Hannibal takes off his coat. The sharpness of his voice rouses Winston his head popping up from amongst the pile of sleeping dogs. “I have terms,” adds Will more calmly with a reassuringly smile for his furry friend.

“Terms,” says Hannibal, “had I better pour myself a large glass of wine?”

“Yes, you’ll find a glass and corkscrew on the kitchen table.” Will’s heart hammers away in his chest as he waits for Hannibal to return. He wants control of the situation and that means keeping his emotions in check. Anger isn’t going to help him neither is the desire which sparked when Hannibal walked through the door.

He swallows making brief eye contact with Hannibal as the man sits down opposite, “First, my dogs will not be fed human meat ever.”

“Understood,” replies Hannibal.

“I take it Cain and Abel have to eat human?” asks Will.

“Yes, you are correct.”

“We will select their meat together, that is not negotiable.”

“I have no objection to that,” says Hannibal, he’d expected a blanket ban but this is far more agreeable.

“I also want to see the Aviary and how the birds are kept.”

“Of course.”

“None of my colleagues will eat or drink human, is that clear.”

“Very clear, my darling.” Will sounds more sure of himself with each demand, Hannibal finds he likes it.

“Bedelia is not to be turned into a Raven, a statute, field kabuki or anything else.” Will pauses, whiskey swirling around in his glass. He does recognise a time may come when this prohibition may need to be reviewed, “if she proves a problem in the future we can talk about it again.”

Hannibal nods, *a future problem is very likely*.

“I want to review the qualities which allow humans to be claimed.”

“You are not against humans being claimed,” Hannibal asks seeking clarification.

“Hmm, in general yes, but there are some worthy recipients of such torture, I’m thinking child abusers and other human monsters, is that acceptable.”

“I believe I can work with that,” says Hannibal trying not to appear to pleased with Will’s reasonableness, he is more certain than ever of his husband’s ability to adapt and evolve.

Another glass of wine is drank before the list of terms is exhausted. Hannibal suspects the addition of a few last minute ones to forestall the striking of the deal but seeing Will flustered is a pleasure worth waiting for.

“Well,” says Hannibal placing his glass on the floor, for lack of a side table. “I think a kiss is needed to seal our agreement.”

“And, and I am not at your beck and call, you cant just snap your fingers and expect me to come running.”

“No?” asks Hannibal straightening his jumper and adjusting his sitting position his legs wider apart.

Will blinks and he’s straddling firm thighs, fingers play with his curls, “are you quite sure about that?” asks Hannibal tugging the smaller man closer.

“Well, maybe, sometimes,” replies Will putting his hand on Hannibal’s chest, feeling the defined pectorals through soft, wool fabric. His eyes lingering on the few tufts of hair visible above the vee of the neck.

Lifting up Will's chin Hannibal coaxes a kiss, "you're mine now," he says as they share each others breaths.

"And your mine," says Will sliding a hand around to the nape of Hannibal's hair, fingers just dipping beneath wool.

With a relaxed Will in his arms, Hannibal allows himself to think of how perfectly they fit together, "I've never loved anyone else but you Will."

"Good, I get jealous," they both laugh and lips met again in tender touches.

There is no rush this time just the steady intensification of touch, breath and heat, they have all the time in the world after all.

Drawing back Hannibal watches the flow of Will's breath through kiss swollen lips. "We must celebrate our union," he murmurs against the pale skin of his husband's neck. He immediately notices a hitch of breath, "don't worry it will be small, a few hundred may be," certainly the few thousand he had originally thought was out of the question. Will pulls away, but to Hannibal's relief he doesn't try to escape their embrace.

"Hmm, I don't do well in crowds," says Will fiddling with the neck of Hannibal's jumper.

With Will sat soft and pliant in his lap Hannibal realises how easy he will cede his power, "What would you prefer?"

Will presses his mouth to Hannibal's tasting him, "No fuss," blue eyes lock onto amber ones, "But I can compromise."

"An intimate dinner party with my lords and their families."

Will's face twinges and Hannibal revises down again, "My first lord and his wife?"

"Yes," agrees Will quick with relief, "then maybe the rest of the lords for our five year anniversary," and with a mischievous grin he adds, "once they don't see me as dinner."

Hannibal chuckles softly, "I am the only one to devour you." Fingering the buttons of Will's shirt he asks, "let me make love to you fully and completely."

"Yes, but in your true form," Will replies.

"Not here, come with me to my home, to our home."

****

The two lovers stand on the porch the dogs at their heels, it has been hours but twilight has yet to fade to darkness, "the sky is beautiful tonight," observes Will.

"The blue matches your eyes," replies Hannibal, taking his husband's hand he lightly kisses it.

Will laughs, “You can’t change the sky surely.”

Hannibal just smiles.

Chapter End Notes

I'd originally planned to have Hanni kidnap and potentially torture Bev to get Will to come to him, but that isn't right for this Hanni who fell in love with Will at first sight and is besotted but doesn't quite know how to show that properly hence the quick wedding. I thought this fitted better and gave a happy ending.

FYI - Hanni became the landlord of the Stag's Head because he was bored and finds it amusing to spy on his subjects and test them - being the landlord allows him to operate undercover - most of Hanni subjects never leave their own dimension and they know who he is but many also live in the human world and would not recognise him in his human person suit - hope that makes sense

I know there are a few loose ends here and there, mostly because I changed my mind on the 2nd chapter, but they are not of major importance to the plot and I might resolve them if i do a spin off from this with Will in the other dimension. I have a few thoughts about it but would need to create a world, and that might take some doing. If I do write it I may post it under this or start a new series. Thanks for reading.

End Notes

1)So the chanting, they have wed, Hannibal being a mighty King basically officiated at his own wedding, just a shame Will didn't know.

2)Supernatural beings displayed as 'field kabuki' appear human

3)The 'wedding' is a bit quick, for the human realm atleast, but Hanni knows Will is THE ONE and he is not one to waste an opportunity; no one says 'no' to Hanni he is afterall a powerful and immortal King. Be assured Will has plenty to say about it in part 4

4)Just to clarify, Will's pure empathy is a natural part of who he is, and one of the reasons supernatural beings are attracted to him, but his knack for monsters is influenced by the feather.

In chapter 2 Will is not just going to accept his marriage to Hanni and will have some stern words on the subject. Hanni does his best to convince him. Hanni meets Jack, Bev and the team. Bev gets herself into trouble and Will is the only one who can save her. Bev will play cupid, happy ending

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